

A roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) 3 3 For voters, potential voters and those who assist voters.

## Your vote made the difference!

## UOCAVA Citizens Had Significant Impact on November 5 Election

Forty-nine percent (49%) of the voting age general public participated in the November 5, 1996 general election. Official statistics on participation by citizens voting under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)* will be available in late Spring. Once again, absentee voters played a significant role in determining the outcome of various contests at the Federal, state and local level.

Many state and local government officials reported an increase in absentee voting, in part due to adoption by the states and territories of procedures to make voting easier for citizens. For example, procedures such as voting-by-mail, early voting, late counting of ballots, and the electronic transmission (fax-

ing) of election materials, all contributed to increased voting participation, including participation by *UOCAVA* citizens: active duty members of the Uniformed Services, their family members, and all overseas civilian citizens-- over 6 million eligible citizens.

### Nationwide Impact

In the December '96 issue of *Voting Information News (VIN)*, we reported how absentee ballots had determined the outcome of various races Nationwide. Results from additional research by the FVAP into the outcome of other races reveals that absentee ballots played a critical role in many more contests across the Nation. Among these were:

**Delaware's 38th State Representative District:** Democrat Shirley A. Price defeated Republican contender William O. Murray 5,226 votes to 5,143, a difference of only 83 votes. A total of 537 absentee ballots were cast in this election, 19 of which were ballots cast by *UOCAVA* citizens in the Armed Forces and overseas.

**Lieutenant Governor's race in Arkansas:** In this close race, the 24,059 absentee ballots cast were far larger than the vote differential between the two contenders: Democrat Charlie Chaffin (428,269 votes) and Republican Win

Rockefeller (438,634 votes). A mere 10,365 ballots made the difference in this statewide race, less than half the absentee ballot total.

**Kansas' 8th District State Board of Education race:**

When all ballots were counted, Mary Douglass Brown (R) defeated Michael D. Gragert (D) by 236 votes (37,348 to 37,112). However, absentee ballots comprised 10% of the total ballots cast.

The above are a few examples where absentee ballots made a difference in the November 5 general election. The following is an example where a military person's single vote made a difference, one of the most dramatic cases where a single *UOCAVA* ballot determined the outcome of an election. This time it involved all the City Council seats in Loretto, Kentucky.

(see **Kentucky**, pg. 2)

## In November '96 Election

### Electronic Transmission Contributed to Higher Participation Rate

An analysis of statistics on voting participation in the November 5, 1996 general election suggests a direct correlation between those states that allow for electronic transmission (faxing) of election materials on a regular basis and higher participation rates by the voting age population in those states.

While 49% of the voting age general public participated in the November 5 election, several states, including the vast majority of those that allow for faxing of election

materials on a regular basis, experienced participation rates **higher** than the national average.

Statistics available from State Election Offices and the Congressional Research Service reveal the following participation rates in states that allow for electronic transmission on a regular basis:

National Average	49.08%
Alaska	56.85
Hawaii	40.46
Kansas	56.06
Louisiana	56.98
Montana	62.06
New Jersey	50.98
North Dakota	55.97
Washington	54.77

In all cases, except Hawaii, participation was higher than the national (see **ET**, pg. 4)

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## City Council Elected by One UOCAVA Voter!

(Kentucky, from pg. 1) Due to a 1992 Amendment to the Kentucky Constitution that changed the lengths of terms for City Council members in the state, the four positions in the City of Loretto (Marion County) were up for re-election in 1996. When no candidate from Loretto filed by the May deadline, Mr. Eddie Lee, County Clerk, checked with the election officials and confirmed the Council seats were indeed up for re-election. Since there were no candidate names to be placed on the November ballot, Clerk Lee decided to utilize the write-in portion of the ballot and placed four blanks on the ballot representing the four seats on the Council.

As Airman Travis Greenwell, of Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, executed his absentee ballot for his legal residence in Loretto, he came to the section for City Council and there were no candidate names listed. Airman Greenwell used his absentee ballot to write-in his choices for City Council using the four blanks provided

and voted for his mother, his uncle, a friend, and another local resident of the town.

When the ballots were counted it turned out that Airman Greenwell was the only person who voted for the seats, thereby selecting the entire City Council!

Clerk Lee told the *VIN* he believes that this was caused by people "talking themselves out of it," meaning that they believed that the Council was not up for re-election until 1998 so they did not write-in their choices. Whatever the reasons of others for not voting, Airman Greenwell's choice of candidates determined who would run the city for the next term. Only one of his choices took the oath of office. The remaining seats were filled through administrative guidelines for filling such vacancies.

Airman Greenwell, who has since then left the Service, is very proud of his single-handed accomplishment. "I think stories like this give people in the Service a reason to vote," he stated.

## Voting Assistance Officers "To Do" This Month

[ ] Make sure you have sufficient quantities of materials for participation in '97 elections. Encourage participation in elections this year. See motivational article (beginning on pg. 1) for details.

[ ] Encourage submissions to the 1997 Voting Slogan Contest from all citizens. The winning slogan will be featured in all FVAP motivational materials for the next two years.

[ ] This newsletter and news releases are now available by e-mail or fax. Contact Marilyn Reck of the FVAP for your choice of method of distribution of this information.

[ ] Feedback from Voting Assistance Officers and citizens is always welcome. Send your comments and suggestions to the FVAP at the numbers below. (Results from the official '96 Post Election Survey will be available later this Spring).



## WANTED: A Few Good Entries!

Does the idea of motivating millions of citizens to exercise one of their most fundamental democratic rights inspire you? If so, the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) encourages you to participate in the 1997 Voting Slogan Contest. The winning slogan will be featured in FVAP materials including motivational voting posters and the 1998-99 *Voting Assistance Guide*.

There is no limit to the number of entries a participant may submit. Slogans must be typed or legibly hand-written on a regular 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet of paper. Send entries to the FVAP, Attn: Voting Slogan Contest, The Pentagon, Room 1B457, Washington, DC 20301-1155. You may also fax your entry to (703) 693-5507 or e-mail it to [vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov).

## Federal Voting Assistance Program

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### Write to:

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Washington, D.C. 20301-1155



### Phone

(703) 695-0663  
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(703) 693-6500  
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DSN 223-5507



### Internet

[vote@fvap.gov](mailto:vote@fvap.gov)  
<http://www.fvap.gov>

**YOUR VOTE IS THE ONE THAT MATTERS**



**Note:** Copying or using *VIN* articles in other publications, etc. is encouraged.

Avoid delays! Submit your FPCA early

## 1997 Statewide & Mayoral Election Calendar

<b>Election</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Primary (if applicable)</b>	<b>General Election</b>
Mayoral	Los Angeles, California	APR 8	JUN 3
Mayoral	Omaha, Nebraska	APR 1	MAY 13
<i>Mayoral</i>	<i>Austin, TX</i>		<i>May 3</i>
<i>Mayoral</i>	<i>El Paso, TX</i>		<i>May 3</i>
<i>Mayoral</i>	<i>Fort Worth, TX</i>		<i>May 3</i>
Mayoral	San Antonio, Texas	---	MAY 3
Mayoral	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	MAY 20	NOV 4
Statewide Governor, State Senate, Gen. Assembly	New Jersey	JUN 3	NOV 4
Statewide Governor, Lt. Governor Attorney General House of Delgs.	Virginia	JUN 10*	NOV 4
Mayoral	Buffalo, New York	SEPT 2*	NOV 4
<i>Mayoral</i>	<i>Detroit, Michigan</i>	<i>SEPT 9</i>	<i>NOV 4</i>
Mayoral	Minneapolis, Minnesota	SEPT 9	NOV 4
Mayoral	New York City, New York	SEPT 9	NOV 4
Mayoral	St. Paul, Minnesota	SEPT 9	NOV 4
Mayoral	Toledo, Ohio	SEPT 9	NOV 4
Mayoral	Seattle, Washington	SEPT 16	NOV 4
Mayoral	Boston, Massachusetts	SEPT 23	NOV 4
Mayoral	Charlotte, North Carolina	SEPT 23	NOV 4

\* = tentative dates

The above calendar provides a list of election dates for statewide offices in New Jersey and Virginia and for Mayoral races in the 50 largest cities. Updates to the calendar featured in the February issue of *Voting Information News* are shown in *italics*.

Please note that Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) requests for registration and a ballot are usually valid for one calendar year. Even if you submitted an FPCA for elections in 1996, you should submit a new FPCA for elections this year. Consult the 1996-97 *Voting Assistance Guide* and your Voting Assistance Officer for details.

### **State Department: Office of American Citizens Services**

Voting Action Officer: Ms. Ruth Boettcher tel: (202) 647-9100 (FTS) 8-647-9100, fax: (202) 647-6201

### **Service Voting Action Officers**

Dept. of the Army: Mr. Tom Feazell tel:(703) 325-4530 (DSN) 221-4530, fax: (703) 325-4532, fax DSN: 221-4532

Dept. of the Navy: Ms. Thelma Jones tel:(703) 614-3248, (DSN) 224-3248, fax: (703) 693-6471

Dept. of the Air Force: Mr. John Lowrance tel:(210) 652-4369 (DSN) 487-4369, fax: (210) 652-5982, fax DSN: 487-5982

Marine Corps GySgt Elijah Kinton tel:(703) 696-2026 (DSN) 426-2026, fax: (703) 696-2068, fax DSN: 426-2068  
ELMS [GMHP03:HQIHQMC]; Internet:kinton\_jre@mqg-smtp3.usmc.mil; E-mail kinton@mhp@hqmc

U.S. Coast Guard: LCDR Reggie Sealey tel:(202) 267-2239, fax: (202) 267-4823

Please share this copy of VIN with others.

(ET, from pg. 1) average, sometimes by as much as 12%, as in the case of Montana.

While electronic transmission was not solely responsible for these above-average voting participation rates, utilization of this alternative method of transmission, through secure Department of Defense fax lines, facilitated the process. Acceptance of electronic transmission by a state is usually one of several statutory or administrative procedures available to citizens designed to facilitate voting in that state. It is important to remember that a percentage increase in participation could translate into thousands more citizens successfully exercising their franchise in that particular state. As a result, all measures that facilitate voting while maintaining the integrity of the process, including electronic transmission, enhance the democratic process itself.

The process consists of three parts: faxing of the registration/absentee ballot request to the local election official; faxing of the blank ballot to the citizen; and return of the voted ballot by fax to the local election official.

In contrast to the above statistics, the majority of states that had lower-than-average voting participation rates have no statutory or administrative provisions in place allowing for faxing of any of the three aspects of the electronic transmission process. While these states do not allow for any electronic transmission, some of these states may have other measures in place that makes voting easier and contributed to the higher participation rate.

"All the states and territories are to be commended for their progress in adopting measures that facilitate voting. These officials are dedicated to enhancing democratization and the FVAP commends them for their efforts," stated FVAP Director Phyllis Taylor.

The FVAP thanks all state and local government officials on behalf of all citizens that must vote absentee because they are away from their legal residence during an election.

## Ombudsman Service

If you cannot resolve your voting concern locally, it's good to know the FVAP is just a phone call away!

### In the U.S. 1-800-438-8683

Antigua 1-800-326-0220  
Australia 0014-800-128509  
Bahamas 180-995-09-20  
Bahrain 800-621  
Barbados 800-534-2104  
Belgium 078-111-455  
Bermuda 800-623-0077  
Brazil 000-811-926-5585  
Canada 800-995-0920  
Chile 00-020-3071  
Colombia 980-12-0896  
Costa Rica 0-800-011-0125  
Denmark 800-10-169  
Dominican Rep. 800-751-7131  
Finland 9800-156-284  
France 0-800-900-156  
Germany 013-081-9277  
Greece 008-001-22-586  
Hong Kong 800-6984  
Hungary 00-800-11-158  
Ireland 1-800-557-083  
Israel 177-102-4012  
Italy 1-678-72-444  
Indonesia 00-800-1-923-3685  
Japan 0031-11-2429

Liechtenstein 1-155-4514  
Luxembourg 0-800-2499  
Malaysia 800-2170  
Mexico 95-800-010-1438  
Monaco 0-59-00-156  
Netherlands 06-022-2499  
Neth. Antilles 001-800-753-0767  
New Zealand 0-800-44-0799  
Norway 800-12093  
Panama 0083-28027-4197  
Philippines 1-800-116-0009  
Portugal 0501-8-13-035  
San Marino 1-678-72-444  
Singapore 800-1300-210  
South Korea 0078-14-800-0203  
Spain 900-93-1108  
Sweden 020-793-503  
Switzerland 155-4514  
Taiwan 0080-10-3153  
Thailand 001-800-1-1-923-6685  
Trinidad & Tobago 1-800-934-7340  
United Kingdom 0-800-895-7403  
Uruguay 000-411-923-7985  
Vatican City 1678-72-4444

## 1997 News Release Recap

Since the March issue of *Voting Information News*, the following news releases have been disseminated by the FVAP. If you have not received them or would like to add your name to the distribution list for future releases, please contact Marilyn Reck at the numbers provided.

**Release 4:** Texas Announces Special Election on March 15, 1997 to Replace Representative Tejeda

**Release 5:** San Antonio, TX to Hold Mayoral Election on Saturday, May 3, 1997

**Release 6:** New Mexico Announces Special Election on May 13 to Replace Representative Richardson

**Release 7:** Pittsburgh, PA to Hold Mayoral Primary Election on Tuesday, May 20, 1997

**Release 8:** Austin, El Paso and Ft. Worth, TX to Hold City Mayoral Elections on Saturday May 3, 1997

**Release 9:** New Jersey to Hold Statewide Governor, State Senate and State Assembly Primary June 3 and General Election November 4, 1997